

Dear SECA Commissioners,

We, the board members of Jumping Off the Page, respectfully request a change in scope for our community reading program, Naperville Reads 2018. The scheduled timing of the program will need to be adjusted from December 2018 to January 2019, as well as the theme, from a STEM-related one for grades 3-5 to one focusing on good will and pulling together as a whole community including all ages.

This year, a rare opportunity has arisen to unite our entire community in the joy of reading, discussing, and attending a culminating event with ONE AUTHOR and ONE BOOK! In January 2019, Macmillan will publish a special edition for adults of the *New York Times*-bestselling children's novel, *Wishtree*, about an oak tree and a crow who help their neighbors embrace their differences. The author, Katherine Applegate, will be able to visit Naperville in January 2019 with the release of her new version of a magical book! Below is a link to an excerpt from the new special edition:

<https://us.macmillan.com/excerpt?isbn=9781250306869>

Katherine Applegate is the award-winning author of many books for young children, including *Crenshaw*, *Home of the Brave*, the *Animorphs* series, and the Newbery Medal-winning book *The One and Only Ivan*. Her *Animorphs* series has sold over 35 million copies worldwide. *Wishtree* is the inspiring story of a community coming together to welcome people who are different from them. *Wishtree* has inspired readers around the world to bring the message of *Wishtree* to life with the "All Are Welcome Here" classroom initiative.

**Awards for *Wishtree* include: NPR Best Book of the Year, Publishers Weekly Best Books of the Year, Washington Post Best Books of the Year, Amazon.com Best Books of the Year, CPL: Chicago Public Library Best of the Best, NYTBR Notable Children's BOTY, ABC E.B. White Read Aloud Award, Booklist Editors' Choice

By bringing our community ONE author and ONE book, readers of ALL ages will have a chance to read, discuss, and enjoy our author events TOGETHER. The launch of Naperville Reads during the Winter of 2002 was the last time we had such an opportunity. Gary Paulsen was our inaugural author and many community members still share fond memories of Mayor Pradel reading aloud Mr. Paulsen's books, local Iditarod enthusiasts mushing their dog sleds on Jefferson Ave., and joining 950+ fellow community members to greet Gary Paulsen at Pfeiffer Hall for a true pep rally for reading. *Wishtree* is exactly the kind of book that will inspire thousands of our citizens to read and then to do good for each other. We're planning to partner with many local non-profits to fulfill the theme and dream of *Wishtree*.

We want to emphasize that we are NOT asking for additional funding. We are just looking for a month extension to hold the event as we need to align with the release of the book.

We hope you'll grant the request to move the Naperville Reads program from December 2018 to January 2019 centered around the book *Wishtree*.

Sincerely,
Jumping Off the Page